



CHESTER

# Urban Sanitary Authority.

## ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR

1893.

BY

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D.P.H., R.C.S., R.C.P., LOND.

*M.O.H.*

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# ANNUAL REPORT

For the Year 1893.

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GENTLEMEN,

In presenting you with my Annual Report for the year 1893. I would first wish to apologise to you for the delay in its production, owing to my own illness. The energy displayed by the Board in carrying out Sanitary reform is well marked in the improved health of the district. The usual tables furnished by the Local Government Board now laid before you do not at first evidence this, but it must be remembered that statistics of a small population do not supply positive data from which conclusions can be drawn.

The population at the time of the last Census (1891) was 9,620, and the estimated population for the middle of 1893 was 10,103.

The number of births registered during the year was 319, 158 males, 161 females, rate of 31·3 per 1000.

The number of deaths during the year was 120, 72 males, and 48 females.

To this must be added 12, the number of deaths outside the district, 10 of which occurred in the Edmonton Union and Enfield Workhouse, and the corrected number of 132 gives a death rate of 13·06 per 1000.

From Zymotic diseases 17 deaths resulted, giving a death rate from these seven principal infectious diseases of 1·7 per 1000. Two of these were from Scarlatina, 3 from Diphtheria, 1 from Typhoid fever, 7 from Measles, and 4 from Diarrhoea. This zymotic death rate is not one from which a true idea of the health of a district can be obtained, as it is evident that an epidemic of any one disease might increase the zymotic death rate considerably, though the general health of the district might be very good.

The rate of infantile mortality deduced from the number of deaths of infants under the age of one year is of more importance as a measure of the health of a district. In the year just passed, 38 deaths of infants were registered, giving an infant mortality of 119 per 1000 born.

At the other extremity of life the deaths at ages of 65 and upwards, numbered 45, that is 4.4 per 1000 of the population, or one third of the whole number of deaths.

The area of your district is 8,430 acres, or 1.2 persons to the acre. The number of available houses is 2,243, giving an average of 4.5 persons per house.

The year 1893 was remarkable for its extreme dryness. The accompanying table will show, however, that the actual rainfall was not much below the average for the last ten years. In March, April, May and June, the rainfall was very small, and thus the amount of water in the soil was diminished. The ground was then so dry that the rather large amount which fell in July and August was lost by evaporation and by rapidly running off the ground without sinking into it.

One house in your district was supplied with water entirely from the rainfall on its own roof, and had a full and sufficient supply throughout the year.

TABLE I.

RAINFALL.

		1893	Average of previous 10 years.
Jan. ...	1.65	1.94	
Feb. ...	3.01	1.38	
March ...	.45	1.75	
April ...	.10	1.48	
May ...	1.14	2.37	
June ...	.81	1.77	
July ...	2.85	2.43	
Aug. ...	2.56	2.41	
Sept. .	.83	1.98	
Oct. ...	3.41	2.71	
Nov. ...	2.39	2.38	
Dec. ...	2.12	1.72	
<i>Total..</i>		21.32	24.55

**Water Supply.**—The greater portion of the district can now be supplied with excellent water from the Board's well, and this has been of special importance during the past year, as so many of the shallow wells have run dry owing to the unusual drought. The only complaint of want of water has come from Beaumont Green, to which the Board's mains do not extend. This small district has always been badly supplied with water. Individual efforts have been made to effect a supply to two of the houses, and these have proved so successful that I do not advise the Board to attempt to carry their mains to this distant and straggling hamlet.

A water main has been carried through Appleby Street and most of the houses have obtained a supply from it, and the houses on the north side of the Brickfield have also been supplied from the mains.

**Drainage.**—An inspection of the district commencing at the south end of the main road, has been proceeding during the year, and the drainage of the houses has been taken from the old sewers, which often ran into ditches leading to the river, and turned into the new sewers, where this was still necessary. I hope this will be continued in a systematic manner, and that Eleanor Road will receive attention, as the sewage in the ditch by the Railway constitutes a nuisance.

**General.**—No more conspicuous instance of the good effects of the works of sanitation could be produced than the change effected in the health of the Brickfield. All the houses have now been drained and supplied with good water, the roads and footpaths have been properly made up, curbed, and channelled, and from being a constant source of anxiety, this place has now become one of the most healthy parts of your district. Sanction for a loan to be employed in draining Goff's Oak and Goff's Lane, has now been obtained from the Local Government Board, and I hope this work will be completed this year, and another general nuisance and source of danger to health will thus be removed.

So much work having been practically commenced, I hope the Board will turn their attention to Appleby Street and Hammond Street. In neither of these places will there be occasion for the spending of money, as no long sewers need be used. All



that is required is to enforce the provisions of the Public Health Act (1875). The soil in both is of a most composite character, —clay, chalk, flints and gravel being found in a remarkable mixture. Such a soil is very easily polluted by sewage, etc., and the drainage of many of the houses is arranged to do as much harm as possible. At the same time, most of the houses have good sized gardens, and with proper attention the drainage of each house can be conveniently disposed of without any nuisance, whilst the expense of running a sewer to such a distant part is quite unnecessary.

**Infectious Diseases.**—SCARLET FEVER prevailed extensively in the months of January and February, and a few scattered cases occurred in the summer. In October, between the 11th and 14th, eight cases were reported, the connecting link between them being apparently the Trinity Schools. The managers of all the schools at Waltham Cross, acting on my advice, promptly closed their schools for a time, and the Trinity schools were disinfected with sulphur. A few cases, chiefly in connection with the Waltham Abbey schools, occurred in November, and the disease continued to spread in December. Two deaths occurred in the last quarter of the year. The noticeable feature in the character of the disease throughout the year was the comparatively large proportion of adults attacked compared with young children. 49 cases over 5 years, and 16 under that age were reported.

DIPHTHERIA. Twenty-three cases of diphtheria were reported. Three of these of children under five, proved fatal in the last quarter of the year.

TYPHOID FEVER. Seven cases were reported. Four of these occurred in July in a house in the High Road, Waltham Cross. The disease was probably contracted in Nazing by the first case. There being no isolation hospital available, the patient had to remain in the house, and three of the inhabitants contracted the disease—a fourth went to live elsewhere and escaped. One death resulted. To prevent the spread of the disease, by persons coming from the other houses to nurse these patients, I obtained the services of a trained nurse from London. This was sanctioned by the Board. When the death occurred I was obliged to have the body removed to the hearse house at the cemetery, the only place available.

The house in which the epidemic occurred was in a very dilapidated state, and on October 24th, I advised that notice should be served on the owner to make the necessary repairs, and if this notice was not complied with, proceedings should be taken under the Housing of the Working Classes Act.

PUERPERAL FEVER. Three cases of this disease were notified. No deaths.

ERYSIPELAS. Twenty cases were reported. No deaths.

MEASLES. This disease not being included, I can form no estimate of the number of attacks, but 7 deaths were attributed to it.

A. Table of Deaths classified according to Diseases and Ages.

At all ages.								Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Typhoid.	Measles.	Diarrhæa.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, &c.	Heart Disease.	All other Diseases.
Under 1 Year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.											
120	33	11	2	6	28	35	Under 5.	2	3		7	4		7		26
							Over 5.		1				10	10	10	40

B. Table of Population, Births, and New Cases of Disease known.

Population of all ages.				Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Typhoid.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.
Census 1891.	Estimated to middle of 1893.	Registered Births.	Under 5.	16	5			
9620	10,103	319	Over 5.	49	18	7	3	20

(Copy of Forms supplied by the Local Government Board).

Prevention of Infectious Disease.—The Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act is in force in your district. I regret to say, however, that many cases of infectious disease—particularly of scarlet fever—are not reported. It is a matter of diffi-

culty to obtain proof in such cases, but if such could be obtained, I would advise the Board to prosecute the offenders as the most certain method of advertising the Act and the duties entailed by it.

**Isolation of Cases.**—The Board has no Isolation Hospital. A committee has been formed for the consideration of the matter. As a purely temporary measure, arrangements have been made with other authorities for the reception of cases of small pox and scarlet fever. These hospitals being at a considerable distance and not available without previous communication, they are available only for exceptional cases of these two diseases. The four cases of Typhoid previously mentioned show the want of an Isolation Hospital. Had such been available, there would in all probability have been only one case, and the bread winner of the family would not have died.

**Disinfection of Houses** is performed by burning sulphur in the presence of steam. Though this can hardly be considered in itself an efficient disinfectant, no cases of recurrence of the disease after disinfection have come to my knowledge.

**Disinfection of Clothing, &c.** For this you have no provision. Clothing is hung up in the rooms while they are being disinfected by sulphur. A distinct advantage would be gained could the Board obtain a disinfectant, they would be able to come to an arrangement with the surrounding authorities for the joint use of this, which would undoubtedly diminish the expense.

**Slaughter Houses.**—In September, I, with your Surveyor, inspected the Slaughter houses in the district. Many of them were found to be in an unsatisfactory state. Only one is a licensed slaughter house, and the license is in conformity with the law. Your Surveyor was instructed to periodically report to the Board on the condition of the slaughter houses.

**Removal of Refuse.**—A distinct improvement in this duty is observable since the beginning of the year, and I think on the whole the work is fairly well done, but as it is an important factor in the health of the district, I hope the attention given it will not be relaxed.

**Bye Laws.**—The subject of the Board's Bye Laws and their possible improvement, has been occasionally mentioned at your meetings. With regard to the Bye Laws relating to sanita-



tion, with which I am concerned, I do not think much alteration is required. Those respecting slaughter houses might be improved, and I should like to see them more in conformity with the Local Government Board's Memo of 1876.

Sooner than advocate the alteration of Bye Laws I would wish to urge upon the Board the importance of enforcing those already proposed by them. I have been surprised to see in how many cases the provisions of the Public Health Act, and of your Bye Laws, have been disregarded with respect to new buildings.

The infringement of any of these laws in the case of a new building is not only a probable standing evil in itself, but affords opportunity for other builders to obtain the same advantages to themselves, to the detriment of the health of the distsiect.

At a coroner's inquest held in November, the Coroner drew attention to the fact that in a district with a population of 10,000, there was no mortuary, and that a post mortem examination of the body of the deceased had to be performed in a stable under circumstances of very great difficulty.

I would conclude by inviting the Board to carefully consider the following requirements of the district to which previous remarks will already have drawn their attention—

- Isolation of cases of infectious disease.
- Disinfection of clothing, bedding, etc.
- Abating the nuisances existing in the Hammond Street district, by a system of sewage-disposal suitable to the place.

Comparative Statistics for the last Eight Years.

Year	...	...	...	1886	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	Avge	1893
Population	...	...	...	7823	7972	8222	8480	8738	9620	9886	8690	10,103
Births	...	...	...	267	257	300	291	281	340	275	296	319
Deaths	...	...	...	118	142	112	90	167	145	130	129	132
„ from Infectious disease				2	7	12	3	26	10	10	10	17
Death rate per 1000	...			15	18	13	10	19	13	13	14.9	13
From infectious disease				.2	.9	1.5	.35	2.98	1.01	1.01	1.1	1.7

I am, Gentlemen,  
Your obedient servant.  
WALTER F. CLARK,  
M.O.H.



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